

Goals and Objectives: SFY 2021-2023

Work Services Division

Goal #1: Lead efforts that develop and maintain a highly skilled, employment-ready workforce that supports and enhances the economic health of the state and local business communities.

Objectives:

- Ensure Montana employers understand the labor market and have a skilled and ready workforce that meets their needs, today and tomorrow.
- Ensure Montana workers understand the job market and have access to skills development opportunities and job search assistance services.
- Ensure Business, job seekers, educators, students, workforce and economic development partners, and the general public all have a place to go to learn about the workforce and a way to connect with each other to keep it growing.

Goal #2: Engage business and industry to build relationships and understand and address immediate and future workforce needs.

Objectives:

- Facilitate collaboration and foster partnerships with workforce system partners to build a shared vision and strategy;
- Focus on skill development and career paths for job seekers, current workers and business and industry;
- Work closely with K-12 and higher education partners to align skill development opportunities with the needs of business and workers.

Goal #3: Increase knowledge, understanding and use of occupational engagement, preparation and training programs.

Objectives:

- Collaborate with workforce and education partners to promote and expand the use of experiential learning opportunities.
- Operate, support and champion efforts like Jobs for Montana's Graduates that prepare students for the workforce.
- Leverage industry perspective to promote and expand increasing labor force skills via occupational and technical trainings and obtaining licenses and certifications, credentials, and/or degrees.
- Promote and increase the use of earn-while-you-learn training programs including On-the-Job Training, pre/youth apprenticeship, and Registered Apprenticeship.

Goal #4: Oversee, manage, and support administrative and programmatic functions.

Objectives:

- Ensure ongoing work and efforts are aligned with the Division strategic vision and goals.

- Ensure timely, accurate and responsible fiscal management, data evaluation, and quality control and program monitoring.
- Ensure accurate and documented program policy analysis and development, operational guidance, and required reporting.

Goal #5: Capture, maintain and disseminate high quality employment-related information.

Objectives:

- Meet requirements for Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) deliverables.
- Increase relevance of and access to job/labor market information and career resources for all customers.

State Workforce Innovation Board

Goal #1: Align Montana's public workforce and talent development system to ensure it efficiently responds to business and industry needs.

Objectives:

- Support Montana's industry and sector partnership to develop relevant training and education that aligns with industry demand and support Montana's larger economic growth vision.
- Support the continuous improvement and service delivery of Montana's One Stop System and ensure it is accessible, aligned, and accountable to stakeholders across the state.

Goal #2: Encourage alignment among workforce development, K-12 education, post-secondary education, and economic development partners.

Objectives:

- Encourage and support cooperation between workforce and economic development programs, K-12, and post-secondary education in pursuit of jointly operated projects.
- Support post-secondary education initiatives that enhance the ability of workers and employers to obtain timely and appropriate training.
- Support K-12 career exploration and work-based learning initiatives that enable students to understand career opportunities throughout Montana.

Unemployment Insurance Division

Goal #1: Meet or exceed program performance standards.

Objectives:

- Maintain or regain USDOL core measures and secretary standards for benefit timeliness, quality and payment controls.
- Attain an acceptable level of tax performance of timeliness, quality, and completeness based on USDOL Tax Performance System Standards.

- Meet and maintain data validation standards for benefits and tax federal reporting.

Goal #2: Enhance customer and partner communications and program accessibility.

Objectives:

- Streamline configurable, enterprise solution to create, consolidate, and update correspondence templates, focusing on plain writing and standardized formats.
- Customer-centric update of soft and hard copy publications to eliminate jargon and improve understanding.
- Pursue electronic communications with claimants via secure messaging.
- Continually pursue methods to increase access for our customers.

Goal #3: Prevent and detect fraud and improper benefit payments and improve debt recovery.

Objectives:

- Implement risk- and knowledge-based identity confirmation solutions to deter identity theft, reduce improper payments and prioritize collection efforts.
- Continue to upgrade the federal Treasury Offset Program to intercept federal payments for UI benefit overpayments and unpaid employer taxes.
- Collaborate with other state agencies, jurisdictions and federal partners to share criminal enterprise and suspicious activity information.
- Increase resources in our fraud team and explore new tools for detecting and preventing fraud.

Goal #4: Improve quality of online services for employers and reporting agents.

Objectives:

- Enhance Eservices and SIDES including promotion to get more employers engaged. Continue to pursue electronic correspondence vs paper.
- Improve capability of electronic audits.

Goal #5: Strengthen partnership with the Workforce Services Division and our common programs.

Objectives:

- Support wide array of return to employment programs for all UI claimants.
- Continued support and cross-training for Workforce Services Division staff to assist UI claimants and identify eligibility issues.
- Integrate and analyze data across programs to evaluate service efficiency and outcomes beyond federal reporting requirements.

Centralized Services Division

Goal #1: Provide timely and reliable financial information to department personnel to facilitate the best use of financial resources in achieving department goals.

Objectives:

- Prepare timely budget status reports for the department.

- Conduct regular meetings with division and department staff to review financial information.
- Complete financial transactions when due.

Goal #2: Strategically and systematically plan for an increase in the number of retirements over the next biennium.

Objectives:

- Identify mission critical positions held by retirement eligible employees.
- Identify timelines for potential vacancies.
- Develop a plan to transfer knowledge before retirements in mission critical positions occur.

Goal #3: Work to ensure the health and welfare of existing employees through offering flexible hours, work from home options, educational opportunities and mental/emotional resources.

Objectives:

- Work with supervisors to allow employees flexible work schedules as they manage personal and professional demands.
- Assure telework employees have the resources and tools necessary to maintain continuity of DLI services when working from home.
- Provide resources to employees regarding physical health, mental health, communication strategies and professional development opportunities.
- Educate, train, and support managers in remote supervision, communication best practices, and technological options.

Goal #4: Successfully facilitate the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements for the two bargaining units within the agency.

Objectives:

- Reach an agreement with MFPE bargaining unit by October 1, 2021.
- Reach agreement with the Hearings Officers and Mediators bargaining unit by October 1, 2021.

Employment Relations Division

Goal #1: Conduct timely impartial investigations into matters under jurisdiction, including wage and hour, prevailing wage, employment relationship, uninsured employers, contractor registration, and illegal discrimination.

Objectives:

- Trained staff will screen complaint inquiries and advise claimants on appropriate next steps.
- Trained staff collect relevant information from all stakeholders and prepare a final agency decision within applicable timelines.

Goal #2: Conduct thorough audits and inspections of business operations to provide education and ensure compliance with areas under ERD's jurisdiction.

Objectives:

- Deploy sufficient resources to achieve desired number of inspections.
- Work collaboratively with stakeholders to achieve quick resolution of issues and ensure sustained compliance

Goal #3: Foster early resolution of charges and resolve issues at lowest level possible.

Objectives:

- Provide voluntary resolution services when possible
- Initiate and facilitate communication with all interested parties to anticipate challenges and provide solutions.
- Offer and train on new methodologies to groups to provide additional resources and tools for resolution of issues.

Goal #4: Provide technical assistance and educational outreach to businesses, advocacy groups, and interested citizens.

Objectives:

- Correctly answer public inquiries. Ensure public presentations are accurate and knowledgeable of the laws.
- Develop educational outreach for relevant ERD programs.
- Leverage use of technology whenever possible to extend the reach of our educational programs.

Goal #5: Provide timely monitoring and regulatory services for all matters under jurisdiction.

Objectives:

- Respond to all application and renewal requests in a timely manner.
- Provide regular updates to required resources.

Business Standards Division

Goal #1: Provide efficient and effective administrative and professional services, including the protection of public safety, to all stakeholders.

Objectives:

- Assist boards and programs in establishing appropriate and reasonable requirements and qualifications for licensure and renewal based on industry standards.
- Ensure complaints from the public and other jurisdictions regarding practice issues and misconduct are processed in a timely manner and the public has an opportunity to be informed of the outcomes.

- Adopt, through a consensus-based process, sensible uniform standards for construction, installation, and materials consistent with accepted standards of design, energy efficiency, accessibility, and uniformity for enforcement.
- Obtain National Institute for Standards & Technology (NIST) recognition for the State Metrology Laboratory and ensure all standards used by registered service providers have up to date certificates of calibration.
- Ensure all occupational licenses, building permits, and measuring device licenses are issued in a timely manner.
- Provide required inspections in a timely manner.

Goal #2: Leverage technology to maximize the provision of these services.

Objectives:

- Provide accurate and timely information regarding BSD programs via our website and online services.
- Encourage, promote, and maximize the use of the BSD online citizen access portal for all applicable applications, renewals, and permits.
- Continue to provide business-requested services such as jobsite-issued permits, off-hours capability, and real-time inspection results delivered directly to smart phones of contractors.
- Implement a virtual inspection program to allow for inspections when onsite inspections aren't possible or can't be performed in a timely manner.

Goal #3: Streamline and improve customer service experience for customers interacting with the Department's website or applications.

Objectives:

- Evaluate opportunities for modernization of dated systems.
- Evaluate opportunities to create a value-add within existing systems.
- Utilize technology to streamline customer communication - aiming for efficient,
- Collaborate with strategic partners.

Goal #4: Support data-driven decision making within the Department.

Objectives:

- Assemble quality data.
- Collaborate with strategic partners.
- Provide technological support for organizing, securely storing, and analyzing the data.

Goal #5: Utilize technology to increase efficiency and productivity for employees within the Department.

Objectives:

- Provide fast and reliable desktop support services.

- Consider employee efficiency and productivity when considering hardware and software purchases.
- Work with Department leadership to determine areas where a technology-based solution could create efficiencies within the business process.

Technology Services Division

Goal #1: Streamline and improve customer service experience for customers interacting with the Department's website or applications.

Objectives:

- Evaluate opportunities for modernization of dated systems.
- Evaluate opportunities to create a value-add within existing systems.
- Utilize technology to streamline customer communication – aiming for efficient, effective, and timely customer interactions.
- Collaborate with strategic partners.

Goal #2: Support data-driven decision making within the Department.

Objectives:

- Assemble quality data.
- Collaborate with strategic partners.
- Provide technological support for organizing, securely storing, and analyzing the data.

Goal #3: Utilize technology to increase efficiency and productivity for employees within the Department, while maintaining security of electronic information.

Objectives:

- Provide fast and reliable desktop support services.
- Consider employee efficiency and productivity when considering hardware and software purchases.
- Work with Department leadership to determine areas where a technology-based solution could create efficiencies within the business process.

The Governor's Office of Community Service

Goal #1: Conduct statewide outreach to increase volunteerism and encourage Montanans to be civically engaged.

Objectives:

- Encourage and promote community volunteerism.
- Encourage Montanans to be civically engaged in their communities.
- Connect Montanans with opportunities to serve.

Goal #2: Expand and support national service.

Objectives:

- Provide technical assistance and training to AmeriCorps State programs.
- Expand National Service programs statewide.
- Encourage cross-stream service collaboration and networking.

Goal #3: Increase sustainability of national service and volunteerism.

Objectives:

- Engage current and new philanthropic partners.
- Diversify financial support.
- Advance and expand initiatives that contribute to sustainability of National Service efforts in Montana, and the country.

Goal #4: Develop and strengthen relations with community partners.

Objectives:

- Develop and strengthen relations with American Indian communities and Tribal leaders.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with other organizations.
- Strategize and plan cross-stream service partnerships.

Goal #5: Increase statewide Commissioner engagement.

Objectives:

- Engage Commissioners in National Service activities.
- Engage Commissioners in OCS activities.
- Expand Commissioner engagement in public outreach and education of elected officials.

Goal #6: Increase opportunities for youth to serve.

Objectives:

- Encourage a lifelong commitment to service among young adults.
- Recognize volunteer efforts of students.

Goal #7: Recognize meaningful volunteers in communities throughout Montana.

Objectives:

- Recognize volunteers and community improvement efforts statewide.
- Highlight volunteerism impact to the public.

Workers' Compensation Court

Goal #1: Improve and revise the Court's rules.

Objective:

- Continue to annually review the Workers' Compensation Court Rules to ensure they remain clear and easy to decipher for unrepresented parties as well as the practicing bar. Update the rules to reflect modern methods of communication and filing, i.e., electronic filings.

Goal #2: Continue flexible policy of conducting conferences, hearings, and trying cases when and where the parties wish.

Objective:

- The Court will continue to be flexible when scheduling trials. The Workers' Compensation Court has statewide jurisdiction and holds regular trial terms in five Montana cities: Billings, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell, and Missoula. Week-long trial terms are held in each city four times a year. In the past, the Court has also held trials in Butte, Red Lodge, Big Fork, Miles City, Malta, Columbus, Bozeman, Sidney, Plains, and Hardin. The Court allows flexibility in the method of holding conferences, hearings, and trials and will conduct them via video conference upon agreement of all parties.

Goal #3: Maintain the average time between submission and decision to within 90 days.

Objective:

- Issue timely rulings.
 1. The Court utilizes law clerks who conduct legal research and assist with drafting and finalizing decisions and substantive interim orders. The Court maintains an in-house submitted list which prioritizes cases by date of trial or submission of motions and is reviewed weekly by the law clerks and Judge.
 2. The Court encourages parties practicing before the Court to have all motions fully briefed and depositions filed on their due date so that the matter can be finally submitted at the conclusion of the trial. The Court has implemented procedures which facilitate ruling on motions to assist matters proceeding to trial in a timely manner. The clerk of court and deputy clerk also act as pretrial hearing examiners. The pretrial hearing examiners facilitate the pretrial process to ensure the matter will be submitted at the conclusion of the trial.
 3. The Court endeavors to issue bench rulings whenever possible, thus expediting decisions.

Goal #4: Continue to post final, published decisions on the Court's website and upgrade its website for legal research purposes.

Objective:

- The Court will continue to post its published decisions and any substantive orders on its website. The Court is in the process of refining its website to include an in-depth search engine for legal research purposed by partnering with information technology personnel.

Goal #5: Continue to Maintain the Workers' Compensation Court website.

Objective:

- The Court will continue to maintain its extensive website. The website contains helpful information for parties practicing before the Court. The court clerks are proficient in uploading information on the website to ensure current data and information for its users. Court decisions are published on the website dating back from 1993 to present. Links to Montana Supreme Court decisions and other state agencies are also provided on the website. Court personnel are readily accessible through e-mail address links located on the website. The website contains the Court's calendar, which is continually update. The website also contains the Court rules, legal forms, general information, and helpful hints.

Goal #6: Continue to support easy accessibility by pro sé (unrepresented) parties.

Objective:

- The Worker's Compensation system is intended to be primarily self-administering. In furtherance of this goal, the Court is designed to make navigating through the system as easy as possible for pro sé (unrepresented) parties. One of the ways this goal is accomplished is by keeping the Court's extensive website updated. Additionally, the Court provides helpful assistance with any procedural questions a pro sé party may have. Along with the Court's rules, the website contains forms and an informational brochure specifically geared toward pro sé parties. Hard copies of these materials are also available upon request.

Goal #7: Continue to post maintain wireless internet access.

Objective:

- The Court purchased and will continue to maintain wireless internet service to enable parties access to the internet on their personal laptop computers in the Court's Helena courtroom for legal research during trials, oral arguments, and conferences.

Goal #8: Continue to allow electronic filing of documents.

Objective:

- The Court will continue to allow for the electronic filing of documents to assist parties in timely filing their documents.

Goal #9: Continue the Court's relationship with the Alexander Blewett III School of Law.

Objective:

- In an effort to continue its historical relations with the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana, the Court will be engaging student interns. The interns will observe court proceedings and draft Court orders and decisions.